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Grammar: Auxiliaries, Modals & Prepositions





Auxiliaries

Q. What is an auxiliary verb?

- An auxiliary verb is also called a helping verb.
- A verb used in forming the tenses, moods, and voices of other verbs
- It comes before some verbs.

"The auxiliary verbs of English are the following:

Modals - can, could, may, might, will, would, shall, should, must, ought, need

Non-modals - am, is, was, were, be, has, have, had, do



Examples:

To do - do, does, did

- I **do** work diligently.
- Johnny **does** not steal the chocolates.
- They **did** win the last championship.

To have - has, have, had

- I **have** eaten all of my food.
- John **had** cycled out of the town in the scorching heat.

To be - am, is, are, was ,were ,been ,being

- Kylie **is** singing at Wembley stadium.
- I **was** beaten by a better player



Modals

Modal is always the first word in the verb group.
It comes before the auxiliaries 'be' and 'have'.

E.g.:

- She **might** be going to Switzerland for Christmas.
- I **would** have liked to see her.
- Sam **may** not be able to attempt this test.
- Lisa **could** have achieved a higher score if she had prepared well.



Practise Time

Complete the blanks with the verbs in brackets at the end of the sentences in Past Simple Tense.

1. There _____ some milk in the cup. (**be**)
2. She _____ her son with her yesterday. (**have**)
3. I _____ to come early to my office last week. (**Can**)
4. The sales representatives _____ a meeting last Wednesday. (**have**)
5. Where was he last night? I believe he _____ at the theatre. (**be**)
6. They _____ both sick last week. (**be**)
7. We _____ talk after the lesson. (**can**)
8. The weather _____ rather good last month. (**be**)
9. She _____ bring you this book yesterday. (**cannot**)
10. They _____ late to school yesterday. (**be**)

Ans:

1. Was
2. Had
3. Had
4. Had
5. Was
6. Were
7. Could
8. Was
9. could not
10. Were



Modal verbs

Modal verbs are a type of auxiliary verb which express the mood of another verb.

They are used to express -

- Ability
- Permission
- Obligation
- Deduction
- Prediction
- Speculation
- Possibility
- Necessity
- Prohibition

HAVE TO

• Obligation

MUST

• Obligation

**DON'T
HAVE TO**

• No obligation

MUST NOT

• Prohibition



Examples of Modal Verbs

Can	Permission(informal) Ability	Can I open the window? She can complete the task in 2 days.
May	Possibility Permission (Formal)	I may be home late. May I sit down, please?
Could	Possibility Request(Formal)	That story could be true - who knows! Could you tell me the way to the station please?
Must	Obligation, Strong belief	I must go now. She must be over 90 years old.
Might	Slight possibility	We might win a prize but I doubt it.
Should	Advice	You should stop smoking.
Shall	Offers/suggestions (Formal) with 'I' and 'we':	I shall be in London on Monday. Shall we begin the meeting now?
Would	Request or offer(Formal) in if-sentences	Would you like a cup of tea? If I were you, I would say sorry.
Will	Information about future Rules or orders	We will reach home before midnight.



Will / Shall / Would

Will

- Giving information about the future
- When we're ready or open to doing something
- Rules or orders

Shall

- to make offers/ promises using I/we
- to make suggestions using I/we
- to express formal obligations

Would

- *expectations in the past*
- *Habits in the past*

Let's compare "Will/ Shall, Would"

- **We'll** head home after work.
- Sure, **I'll** have a cup of coffee. Thanks!
- Guests **shall not remove** anything from the rooms.
- Students **will** remain on campus during school hours.
- I **shall** never **forget** the help you gave me.
- *The sky was getting cloudy, which meant it **would** rain.*
- *When we lived in the mountains, we **would** go hiking all the time.*



Can/Could

When we talk about a possibility, we use ‘*can*’ or ‘*could*’, but they are different in meaning.

Can

- To express a possibility (in general)
- To offer to do something for others
- To ask for or give permission / To request something

Could

- To **express past ability**.
- Polite word used to ask for permission or to request something (in the present)
- Couldn't: Sure that something is untrue

Let's Compare “***Can/Could***”

- *It **can** be dangerous to cycle in the city.*
- *I know you **can** win the competition.*

- ***Could*** you pass me the salt please?
- *He **couldn't** have painted that. He has no artistic ability at all.*



Should/Must

Should

- Expresses advisability, a suggestion.
- "It is advisable to..." or "This is a suggestion..."
- **Should** is weaker than must.

Must

- Express a stronger point of view.
- "We need to..." "We have to..."
- The modal must also express opinion, one person's point of view.

Let's compare *Should/Must*

- People **should** protect the environment.
- Engineers **must** redesign engines so that they are more fuel-efficient.



May/Might

Both **may** & **might** are used to express the possibility of some future action; **might** is more tentative than **may**.

May

- Is used to express what is possible, factual, or could be factual.
- Is used to ask permission in a more formal way than 'can'.

Might

- Is used to express what is hypothetical, counterfactual, or remotely possible.
- Is also used as a past tense of "may"

Let's compare "**May/ Might**"

- *The weather **may/might** be better tomorrow.*
- *Craig **may/might** know his results soon.*
- *We **may/might** go to the cinema tonight.*
- *You **may** go the wedding reception if there is a cash bar*
- *You **might** go to the wedding reception if there is an open bar (and you will not have to pay for your drinks).*



Practice Time

Fill in the blanks with a modal auxiliary verb.

1. you mind posting this letter for me?

- a) Could
- b) Would
- c) Should

2. you lend me your bicycle?

- a) Shall
- b) Will
- c) May

3. You not come to my door again.

- a) will
- b) shall
- c) would

4. You regret this.

- a) shall
- b) may
- c) can

5. What we do now?

- a) will
- b) shall
- c) can

6. Parents teach their children to be honest.

- a) shall
- b) should
- c) would

7. He take rest if he is tired.

- a) would
- b) can
- c) shall

8. You have told me before borrowing my car.

- a) would
- b) should
- c) might

9. The students asked if they go home early.

- a) would
- b) could
- c) can

10. I run faster when I was younger.

- a) would
- b) should
- c) could

Answers

- 1. Would
- 2. Will
- 3. Will
- 4. May
- 5. Can
- 6. Should
- 7. Can
- 8. Should
- 9. Can
- 10. Could



Prepositions

- Show a relationship in space or time
- A logical relationship between two or more people, places or things.
- Prepositions are commonly followed by a noun phrase or pronoun
- There are over 100 prepositions in English.

The last time I saw him he was walking down the road.

I'll meet you in the cafe opposite the cinema.

It was difficult to sleep during the flight.

It was the worst storm since the 1980s.

Give that to me.



Prepositions of Place

1. Look at the map above.
Follow the instructions to Mary's House.
Use a pencil or a pen to draw a line to Mary's house.

How to get to Mary's house.

- 1 Start at the Star.
- 2 Go down main Road and go past the restaurant, the fish shop and the library.
- 3 Turn left into West Street and go towards the station.
- 4 Mary's House is on the left in front of the station.





Prepositions and abstract meanings

Common prepositions that show relationships of space often have **abstract** as well as **concrete** meanings.

Compare

- *That map you need is **behind** the filing cabinet. (basic spatial sense or position)*
- *Everyone is **behind** the government. (behind = gives support)*
- *Beyond the hotel were beautiful mountains. (basic spatial sense or position)*
- *Learning Chinese in a year was **beyond** them all. (beyond = too difficult for)*



Preposition of Time

ON

...the 22nd of June
...Wednesday
...Sunday evening(s)
...Monday afternoon
...Thursday morning
...Valentine's Day
...Christmas Day
...New Year's Eve
...Good Friday
...Easter Sunday
...the 1st school day
...my birthday
...my wedding day
...time (punctual)

AT

...the moment
...dinnertime
...teatime
...bedtime
...carnival
...Halloween
...Christmas
...the weekend
...9 o'clock / 9:00 a.m.
...half past seven
...twenty to four
...noon
...midnight
...night
...the beginning
...the end (of the day)
...sunset
...moonrise

IN

...February
...1963
...the eighties / 80s
...the late / early 1940s
...10 minutes
...an hour
...5 weeks
...3 months
...the morning
...the evening
...the afternoon
...the meantime
...a while
...a couple of days
...a few seconds
...a fortnight
...(the) winter
...the next century
...the mid-16th century
...time (before due time)



Practice Time

Complete with: about, by, from, in, on, round, through, to, with.

1. My dream is to travel the world.
2. How would you go? plane?
3. No. boat and foot.
4. The traffic in the city was so heavy. It took us two hours to driveit.
5. Manchester we took the plane London.
6. She doesn't seem very happy. fact she looks quite depressed.
7. When the film finished, we all had tears our eyes.
8. That novel is'nt Henry James. It's him.
9. time time he worries his future.
10. The man blue jeans was love the girl glasses.

Answers

1. round
2. by
3. by-on
4. through
5. in-to
6. in
7. in
8. by –
about
9. from – to
- about
10. in – in –
with – with